

Remarks:

The Claims

Applicant has amended Claim 1 and 5-13. Claims 2-4 have been cancelled.
5 Claims 14-18 have been added.

The subject matter for the claim amendments and new claims can be found in the originally filed claims and in the specification as filed. Accordingly, no new subject matter has been added.

Multiple Dependency

10 Claims 4-9 and 13 were objected under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being in improper form because a multiple dependent claim further includes a multiple dependent claim. Applicant has cancelled claim 4 and amended claims 5-9 and 13. These amended claims do not include a multiple dependent claim that depends from another multiple dependent claim. Accordingly, the claims are in proper form.
15 Applicant requests a withdrawal of the rejection.

35 USC 102(e)

Claims 1-3 and 10-12 were rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as anticipated by *Vrhel, Jr. et al.*, US Pat. No. 6,560,726 B1. Applicant has amended the claims to more clearly recite the subject matter of the invention. To the extent the Examiner
20 believes that the rejection of the claims as anticipated by *Vrhel* applies to the amended claims, Applicant traverses the rejection.

“A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference.” MANUAL OF PATENT EXAMINING PROCEDURE (EIGHTH) § 2131 (2005)
25 (quoting *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631 (Fed. Cir. 1987)). “The identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the . . . claim.” *Id.* (quoting *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236 (Fed. Cir. 1989)).

Vrhel does not teach or suggest at least one element of the independent
30 claims; therefore, *Vrhel* does not anticipate the claims.

Vrhel presents a method and system for integrated support in order to solve problems with personal computer systems (*Vrhel*, Col. 2, lines 32-36). *Vrhel's*

method incorporates a monitoring system to detect and resolve computer system problems (*Id.* at Col. 2, lines 36-38). The monitoring system involves a state machine that monitors the boot process by comparing state transitions through the boot sequence against expected results (*Id.* at Col. 5, lines 6-8). The state machine communicates with a watchdog timer 18 to compare the expected time for a predetermined transition from a first point of the boot sequence to a second point against elapsed time for the sequence (*Id.* at Col. 5, lines 8-12). If the timer 18 expires uncleared, then *Vrhel's* system detects a problem indicated by the timer's expiration (*Id.* at Col. 5, lines 12-14). *Vrhel's* disclosed watchdog timers (18,19 Fig. 1) are cleared at the predetermined point of the computer system boot sequence (*Id.* at col. 2, lines 45-46). A problem is detected from the expiration of an expected time period as indicated by the corresponding timer counting to zero prior to the completion of the sequence (*Id.* at col. 2, lines 48-52). In addition, *Vrhel* allows a service routine, which is triggered by a user pressing a service button, to inspect the timer to determine whether a hang-up has occurred (*Id.* at Col. 5, lines 47-58). Furthermore, if the watchdog timer expires before the start-up sequence has completed, then the expiration of the timer causes a reboot of the system (*Id.* at Col. 5, lines 61-67; Col. 6, lines 1-7).

In contrast, claim 1 recites:

- “A method to secure the execution of a program in an electronic assembly having information processing means and information storage means, the method comprising:
- checking the execution time of at least one sequence of said program with respect to the normal predetermined execution time of said sequence, by:
 - planning end of said normal predetermined execution time;
 - planning a point of arrival of said at least one sequence of said program according to the normal predetermined execution time of said sequence;

- starting a counter timer with associated interrupt at the point of departure of execution of said sequence;
 - delivering an interrupt on expiry of said counter timer,
- 5 wherein the expiry of said counter timer corresponds to the planned end of the normal predetermined execution time of said sequence;
- determining an actual point of arrival of said sequence when said interrupt is delivered;
 - checking if the determined actual point of arrival of said
- 10 sequence does correspond to said planned point of arrival.”

Vrhel does not teach or suggest such limitations. For example, amended claim 1 recites “a counter timer with associated interrupt . . . [that is used for indicating] the normal predetermined execution time” *Vrhel* does not teach or suggest this limitation. Rather, *Vrhel*’s discloses watchdog timers (18,19 Fig. 1) that

15 are cleared at the predetermined point of the computer system boot sequence (col. 2, lines 45-46) before the expiration of an expected time period (col. 2, lines 48-52) and not at a normal predetermined execution time as recited in claim 1. In other words, *Vrhel*’s watchdog timers do not have interrupts associated therewith and *Vrhel*’s timers are cleared on different conditions from those claimed herein. In contrast,

20 amended claim 1 recites a “. . . normal predetermined execution time . . . by . . . starting a counter timer with associated interrupt . . . [and] delivering an interrupt on expiry of said counter timer, wherein the expiry of said counter timer corresponds to . . . the normal predetermined execution time”

Applicant respectfully submits that by detecting if a point of a computer

25 system boot sequence has been reached before an expiry of a timer (by clearance of the timer when this point is reached), *Vrhel*’s computer system boot sequence is not the same as Applicant’s claim of detecting the end of a normal predetermined period.

Vrhel neither determines nor compares the actual point of arrival against a planned point of arrival as defined in claim 1. Furthermore, Claim 1 recites

30 “determining an actual point of arrival . . . when said interrupt is delivered” and

“checking if the determined actual point of arrival . . . corresponds to said planned point of arrival.”

Vrhel discloses a problem has been indicated by a “timer 18 expir[ing] uncleared” (*Id.* at Col. 5, lines 12-13). The permitted elapsed time must be much longer than the expected time so as to allow the sequence to complete and allow the service routine to clear the timer to prevent an indication of a problem (*Id.* at Col. 5, lines 12-17). Furthermore, to allow a sufficient time for the user to press the “panic” button, the time set in the watchdog timer must be much longer than the expected time for the transition from a first point to a second point of the boot sequence (*Id.* at Col. 5, lines 10-12).

For the reasons above, claim 1 is not anticipated by *Vrhel* and should be allowed. Amended claims 10-12 recite similar limitations to those set forth in claim 1. Therefore, these claims are patentable for at least the same reasons given above in support of claim 1.

The various dependent claims inherent the limitations from the independent claims from which they depend and provide further unique and non-obvious combinations. Therefore, the dependent claims are patentable over *Vrhel* for at least the reasons provided in support of such independent claims and by virtue of such further combinations.

Accordingly, the whole combinations of characteristics recited in amended claims are new and non-obvious.

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that all the claims now in the application are allowable.
Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and claims and its
5 early allowance. If the Examiner believes that the prosecution of the application
would be facilitated by a telephonic interview, Applicants invite the Examiner to
contact the undersigned at the number given below.

10 Respectfully Submitted,

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